

*The Comicall Historie of*

Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.

*Anth.* I am a tainted Weather of the flocke,  
Meetest for death, the weakeſt kinde of fruit  
Drops earlieſt to the ground, and ſo let me;  
You cannot better be imploy'd, *Baſſanio*,  
Then to live ſtill and write mine Epitaph?

*Enter Nerriſſa.*

*Duke.* Came you from *Padua* from *Bellarion*?

*Ner.* From both: my *L. Bellario* greets your Grace.

*Baſſ.* Why doſt thou whet thy knife ſo earneſtly?

*Jew.* To cut the forfeiture from that Bankrout there.

*Grat.* Not on thy ſoule: but on thy ſoule harſh Jew,  
Thou mak'ſt thy knife keene: but no mettle can,  
No, not the hangmans axe beare halfe the keenneſſe  
Of thy ſharp envie: can no prayers pearce thee?

*Jew.* No, none that thou haſt wit enough to make.

*Grat.* Obe thou damn'd, inexecrable dog,  
And for thy life let juſtice be accuſd;  
Thou almoſt mak'ſt me waver in my faith,  
To hold opinion with *Pythagoras*,  
That ſoules of Animals inſuſe themſelves  
Into the trunks of men: Thy curriſh ſpirit  
Govern'd a Wolfe, who hang'd for humane ſlaughter,  
Even from the gallows did his fell ſoule ſteer,  
And whileſt thou layeſt in thy unhallowed damme;  
Inſuſd it ſelfe in thee: for thy deſires  
Are wolviſh, bloody, ſtarv'd, and ravenous.

*Jew.* Till thou canſt raile the ſcale from off my Bond,  
Thou but offeſt thy lungs to ſpeake ſo loud:  
Repaire thy wit good youth, or it will fall  
To cureleſſe ruine. I ſtand for Law.

*Duke.* This letter from *Bellarion* doth commend  
A young and learned Doctor to our Court:  
Where is he?

*Ner.* He attendeth here hard by,  
To know your answer whether youle admit him.

*Duke.* With all my heart: ſome three or ſoure of you

Go

*the Merchant of Venice.*

Go give him courteous conduct to this place,  
Meane time the Court ſhall heare *Bellarion's* Letter.

Your Grace ſhall underſtand, that at the receipt of your Letter, I  
am very ſicke, but in the inſtant that your meſſenger came, in lo-  
ving viſitation was with me a yong Doctor of *Rome*, his name is  
*Balthazar*: I acquainted him with the cauſe in controverſie be-  
tween the Jew and *Anthonio* the Merchant; we turned ore many  
books together, he is furniſhed with my opinion, which bettered  
with his own learning, the greatneſſe whereof I cannot enough  
commend, comes with him at my importunity, to fill up your  
Graces requeſt in my ſtead. I beſeech you let his lack of yeares be  
no impediment to let him lack a reverend eſtimation, for I never  
knew ſo young a body with ſo old a head: I leave him to your  
Gracious acceptance, whoſe tryall ſhall better publiſh his com-  
mendation.

*Enter Portia for Balthazar.*

*Duke.* You heare the learn'd *Bellarion* what he writes,  
And here I take it is the Doctor come.

Give me your hand, come you from old *Bellarion*?

*Por.* I did my Lord.

*Duke.* You are welcome, take your place:

Are you acquainted with the difference,  
That holds this preſent queſtion in the Court?

*Por.* I am enformed throughly of the cauſe,  
Which is the Merchant here? and which the Jew?

*Duke.* *Anthonio*, and old *Shylocke*, both ſtand forth.

*Por.* Is your name *Shylocke*?

*Jew.* *Shylocke* is my name.

*Por.* Of a ſtrange nature is the fate you follow,  
Yet in ſuch rule, that the *Venetian* Law  
Cannot impugne you as you do proceed.

You ſtand within his danger, do you not?

*Ant.* I, ſo he ſayes.

*Por.* Do you confeſſe the Bond?

*Ant.* I do.

*Por.* Then muſt the Jew be mercifull.

*Shy.* On what compulſion muſt I tell me that?

*Por.* The